

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SEOUL 02211 180806Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DODE-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 PM-04 SS-15

NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-07 /043 W

-----180817Z 103766 /13

P 180745Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2728

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 2211

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM PINT KS

SUBJ: UNIVERSITY SPY RING CASE: KIM CHOL-HYUN

REFS: SEOUL 0416, 76 SEOUL 10293

1. TWO JAPANESE REPORTERS TOLD EMBASSY THAT CONFIDENTIAL SOURCES INFORMED THEM THAT ROKG COMMUTED DEATH SENTENCE OF KIM CHOL-HYUN TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT ON MARCH 1. KIM, FORMER HANKUK THEOLOGY SEMINARY STUDENT, HAD RECEIVED DEATH SENTENCE UPON CONVICTION FOR ESPIONAGE (SEE SEOUL 10293 OF 1976 AND PREVIOUS). ONE REPORTER CALLED MINISTRY OF JUSTICE SEEKING CONFIRMATION AND WAS TOLD MINISTRY COULD NEITHER CONFIRM NOR DENY REPORT.

2. EMBASSY ALSO TELEPHONED PROSECUTION BUREAU OF MINISTRY OF JUSTICE. MINISTRY OFFICIAL FIRST SAID HE HAD NO COMMENT, BUT LATER CHANGED POSITION AND STATED THAT HE HAD NO INFORMATION ON ISSUE. EMBOFF SEEKING MEETING WITH CHIEF OF BUREAU OF PROSECUTION IN ATTEMPT ASCERTAIN TRUTH OF REPORT.

3. COMMENT: THERE IS POSSIBILITY THAT REPORT IS TRUE. ALTHOUGH ROKG PROBABLY CONSIDERS KIM GUILTY AND DESERVING OF PUNISHMENT, IT MAY NOT WISH TO PROVOKE INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC OPINION BY EXECUTING HIM, ESPECIALLY CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SEOUL 02211 180806Z

SINCE THIS CASE HAS ALREADY ATTRACTED INTEREST OVERSEAS. GRANTING OFFICIAL COMMUTATION OF DEATH SENTENCE RATHER THAN MERELY NOT EXECUTING KIM NECESSARY FROM HUMANITARIAN POINT OF VIEW, BUT ROKG, WHICH WISHES TO MAINTAIN IMAGE AS UNYIELDING IN FACE OF FOREIGN PRESSURE ON INTERNAL POLICIES, WOULD PROBABLY NOT WISH TO LET PUBLIC KNOW THAT IT HAS COMMUTED SENTENCE.

STERN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ESPIONAGE, UNIVERSITIES, COURT DECISIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977SEOUL02211
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770093-0170
Format: TEL
From: SEOUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770345/aaaabmttd.tel
Line Count: 63
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3dfdadb5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 SEOUL 416, 76 SEOUL 10293
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3065082
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UNIVERSITY SPY RING CASE: KIM CHOL-HYUN
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, KS, (KIM CHOL-HYUN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3dfdadb5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009